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THE POLITICAL INTEGRATION OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITIES

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I. INTRODUCTION

A VERY slight acquaintance with municipal conditions in the United States discloses the fact that one handicap under which practically every city of magnitude is laboring, is political disintegration. The city as a political entity is not identical with the metropolitan community as a social and economic fact; and so, like a house divided against itself, the metropolitan district finds itself obliged to struggle for civic achievement amid the conflicts, dissensions, and divergences of its several component political jurisdictions. In no two communities are conditions precisely the same, and yet in all the fundamental difficulty is political disunity. There are cases in which the principal source of difficulty is the overlapping of city and county, the latter, owing to the growth of population, having become a superincumbent city government; in others contiguous suburban municipalities participating in and to a large extent dominating the social and economic life of the city, are politically independent of it; and in still other cases both of these conditions co-exist in varying degree and form.

To assume, as is often done, that the political dismemberment of a metropolitan community is not a matter of challenging importance is a fatuous mistake. Not only does it militate against economical and efficient administration of local government but it gravely impedes all progressive and comprehensive public undertakings. The great problems which demand governmental action in metropolitan communities—public health, recreation, public utilities, crime, and the like—hold political boundaries in contempt. And the only effect of multiplying political jurisdictions for dealing with such problems is to obstruct and defeat the primary purposes for which local government exists.

It is only fair to remark that such absurd and anomalous structures of local government are not the result of conscious creation. It is well known that political development seldom keeps pace with social and economic facts. Moreover, the metamorphosis of a

small city into a huge, sprawling center of trade and industry is inevitably attended with all sorts of bungling legislation, and is doubtless much affected by the vicissitudes of factional and partisan warfare. The anomalous political dismemberment of the population of a larger metropolitan district is in most cases, therefore, largely a matter of historical accident, and being such, is commonly accepted by the inhabitants as a natural and normal state of affairs.

There are, however, a few places where movements for the political unification of the metropolitan area have been inaugurated and pushed through with varying degrees of success; and there are many other places in which such movements are now in progress. These movements constitute an interesting and important phase of our municipal history, but unfortunately they are recorded only in fugitive documents or fragmentary articles, or not recorded at all. In order to spare the student of municipal institutions the extensive and arduous research necessary to consult all of these obscure and widely dispersed sources, the attempt is here made to bring within the compass of a short essay a summary of the main facts regarding each of the various movements for the political integration of metropolitan areas in the United States.

II. WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED

DETACHMENT OF BALTIMORE FROM BALTIMORE COUNTY: 1851

The city of Baltimore was never politically engulfed in a county like the majority of American cities. From the beginning the city of Baltimore and the county of the same name were separately represented in the legislature of the colony, and this separate representation was continued by the constitutions of 1776 and 1788. Consequently the city early became an independent factor in the politics of the state, and it was not therefore a radical departure to complete the detachment of the city by severing it entirely from the county. This step was taken in 1851; and although the inner history of the event remains somewhat obscure, it appears to have been an incident of a fierce political struggle which convulsed the entire state. Prior to 1851 the government of Maryland was in theory and practice a loose confederation of counties and cities similar in spirit to the national government under the Articles of Confederation. The governing body was a bicameral legislature in which counties and cities were equally represented regardless of size, population, taxable property, or any other basis of differentiation. Indeed the theory frankly avowed in the early history of the state was that these counties and cities had confederated as corporate entities, and consequently that equality was the only fair basis of representation in the legislature.

But time plays havoc with all theories. The rapid growth of Baltimore city quickly engendered acute dissatisfaction with the equal representation principle, and this was aggravated by the increasingly shameless way in which the rural legislators took advantage of their power to enact tax laws exploiting the city for the benefit of the rural sections. On top of this came the nation-wide surge of democratic sentiment, overturning all existing political alignments and sweeping Andrew Jackson into the Presidency.

In Maryland, the city of Baltimore and the other urban sections of the state were thrown into the ranks of the Jacksonian party, while the rural sections of the state remained in control of the opposition, a feeble and hopeless minority. Immediately there was a vehement demand for legislative reapportionment, but the minority intrenched behind the provisions of an illiberal constitution refused to be moved. The demand was repeated with increasing insistence, and in 1836 the struggle culminated in a crisis which carried the state to the brink of civil strife.[1] Unable to resist longer, the legislature in 1839 proposed a constitutional amendment which modified the existing basis of representation but did not provide representation in proportion to population. Still the agitation for a more equitable basis of representation did not subside, and as a consequence a constitutional convention was called in 1849. This body, after a prolonged struggle, submitted a constitutional draft (which was ratified in 1851) embodying the popular basis of representation with restrictions applying only to the city of Baltimore. As a part of the bargaining by which this compromise was effected, the complete detachment of Baltimore city from Baltimore county was agreed upon. Accordingly the constitution of 1851 provided a full complement of county officers for the city of Baltimore and conferred upon the city the status of a county.[2]

From time to time, as the city of Baltimore has grown, its boundaries have been extended by the annexation of suburban communities. The most recent enlargement of the city in this fashion occured in 1918 when the legislature of the state passed an act subtracting some sixty square miles from Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties and adding them to the city of Baltimore. Although the law provided for no referendum, it did provide for compensating the counties which had lost territory or property by the annexation. The annexation law was attacked in the courts because of the absence of a referendum provision, but the courts declined to invalidate it on that account. One of the prime purposes of the annexation measure was to double the waterfront of the city, and thus enable it to extend its port and terminal facilities. It was estimated that 100,000 people were added to the population of the city of Baltimore by this annexation of suburban communities.

[1] Scharf, *History of Maryland*, Vol. III, pp. 187–195.

[2] Debates and Proceedings of Constitutional Convention of 1849, *passim*.

FORMATION OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA: 1854

The city of Philadelphia as laid out by the founder contained an area of about two square miles. Population quickly overflowed these narrow limits. By 1850 the population of Philadelphia county was 409,045 of which only 121,417 resided within the corporate limits of the city of Philadelphia. Outside of the boundaries of the city the population was quite as thoroughly urban as within; in fact the entire county was a unified metropolitan center in all respects except government. In this latter particular it was preposterously dismembered, the work of local government being partitioned among forty different governing bodies —ten municipal corporations, ten special boards, six boroughs, thirteen townships, and one county. The effects of this condition can be best described by quoting the language of the Select Committee of Senators from the City and County of Philadelphia reporting to the state senate in 1853:

It is not to be supposed of human nature that the people of these many separate local governments have not been actuated by a preference and zeal for their separate interests, nor that collisions and hostile feelings have not arisen obstructive to a concert of measures for the common welfare. With no paramount or pervasive power of legislation or control, no laws, uniformly operative over the whole, could be adopted or executed beyond the respective bounds of each. Rioters suppressed in one jurisdiction take refuge and find impunity within another. Measures of public improvement, by the city or respective districts, are arrested at the extreme of their narrow limits; works erected competent to supply the wants of all with but slight additional expense, are curtailed of their usefulness; and other works at large expense uselessly erected by other corporations. The varying laws of so many localities in close contiguity are so numerous and so little known, that citizens in their hourly movements are subjected to legal obligations and powers of which they have no knowledge. These divisions and unseen lines and complication of powers, are potential alike to paralyze or arrest every effort to advance the common welfare and suppress general evils.[3]

Appreciation of the evils described in the foregoing quotation was certainly a strong stimulus to propaganda for a greater and a unified Philadelphia, but even more potent perhaps was the blow to Philadelphia's pride when she was out-stripped by New York in the race for size and commercial supremacy. The first direct step toward unification of local governments seems to have been taken on November 16, 1849, when a group of leading citizens called a public meeting which in turn chose an executive committee to act until a second meeting should be held. This committee in 1851 addressed a memorial to the legislature of the state praying for legislation to consolidate Philadelphia and the suburban municipalities; and two members of the committee, John Cadwalader and Eli K. Price, were sent to Harrisburg to lobby for the desired legislation. However, nothing was accomplished by these efforts.

[3] Quoted in Price, *History of Consolidation in Philadelphia*, Chap. IV.

Riots Help Consolidation

In 1853 Philadelphia was visited with a series of violent and riotous disorders for which the volunteer fire companies were chiefly responsible, and a group of influential citizens was called together to consider ways and means of checking these disturbances. This group, which incidentally included a number of the champions of consolidation, decided that drastic legislation must be secured and that as a means to this end a reform ticket must be put up at the ensuing election. Therefore, on July 30, 1853, a reform convention was held, and Eli K. Price was nominated for the state senate and Mathias W. Baldwin and William C. Patterson for the house of representatives. Mr. Price immediately announced that he stood for consolidation of local governments in Philadelphia county as one of the prime essentials of reform, and the other candidates were impliedly pledged to the same measure. After an arduous campaign all of the reform candidates were elected, and Mr. Price forthwith called a conference consisting of the senators and representatives of the city and the county of Philadelphia and certain leading advocates of consolidation. Under Mr. Price's leadership this conference undertook to frame a consolidation bill and a new charter for the city of Philadelphia, and while it was engaged in these labors an extensive campaign of propaganda in favor of unification was carried on in the newspapers of the city and the county.

The legislative measure thus prepared was presented in the state senate as soon as the legislature assembled in 1854. The forces behind it were so influential and were so powerfully organized that they pushed it through

the senate in the unprecedentedly short period of two weeks. In the house of representatives it was passed with equal promptness; and on the second of February, 1854, it received the signature of the governor. This act was an out-and-out annexation measure. The boundaries of the city of Philadelphia were extended to coincide with the boundaries of the county of the same name, and all of the outlying municipalities, districts, and townships were absorbed by the city. The government of the city was remodeled in such a way as to render it more adequate for the enlarged area, but no striking or fundamental changes were made.[4]

The immediate results of the consolidation and annexation were unquestionably beneficent. For many years Philadelphia and her environs had been disgraced by civil turbulence almost impossible to prevent or control. Negro-baiters intimidated free negroes by unchecked violence; mobs of native workingmen used the same methods against Irish immigrants; over-zealous Protestants practised shameful outrages upon Roman Catholics; rival fire companies were wont to do pitched battle in the streets; and not infrequently the volunteer fire companies refused to extinguish fires started by rioters with whom they were in sympathy. These disturbances and disorders quickly disappeared when unified local government went into operation, for this made possible an effective police department and a paid fire department. Other beneficial results of consolidation were the development of a comprehensive system of water supply and sewage disposal to replace the separate systems of the former independent municipalities; the establishment of a metropolitan park system; and a marked increase in the assessed valuation of property throughout the metropolitan area.

But Philadelphia County Remained

Unfortunately the county of Philadelphia was not included in the consolidation of 1854, although many believe that such was the intent of the law and that such a consummation was only averted by the machinations of scheming politicians. The following newspaper comment affords some conception of the unfortunate consequences of the duplication of city and county:

> Employes dismissed from city departments are taken care of in county offices purely as political dependents, apparently regardless of any necessity for their services to the public. In the city employ they could not actively engage in political work; in the county offices they are under no such provision, and they are not affected by the civil service law under which appointments under the city government are made.[5]

On account of these conditions the more progressive newspapers and civic organizations of Philadelphia are beginning to advocate the consolidation of the city and the county governments, but as yet no organized movement has been launched.

CONSOLIDATION OF CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO: 1856

The influx of population into California following the gold discoveries of 1849 was so prodigious that political institutions became obsolete almost as soon as they were created. The state was divided into counties in 1850, and later in the same year the city of San Francisco was created with boundaries practically identical with those of a previously established county of that name. Thus from the first there was unnecessary duality of government in

[4] Price, *History of Consolidation in Philadelphia, passim.*

[5] Philadelphia Press, Feb. 15, 1920.

this largely urban area. Baneful results were experienced immediately. Extravagance and corruption ran riot; the tax rate and the public debt mounted to oppressive heights; and every effort to improve conditions was paralyzed by the deplorable inefficiency of the governmental system. "And what," said Senator W. W. Hawks to the state senate in 1855, "has brought us to this state of things? This intricate system of government; affording a thousand chances for plunder, and yet a thousand cloaks to hide the Caitiff who robs a trusting people. This duplicate set of officers, officials, hangers-on, loafers, whippers-in, and general plunderers."

A few turbulent years under the dual system served to convince the better elements in San Francisco that a drastic remedy must be applied. Public discussion left no doubt that nothing short of a major operation could effect a cure. While there was much diversity of opinion as to what the nature of the operation should be, there was universal agreement in the proposition that it must bring about simplification. A bill for the consolidation of the city and county of San Francisco was introduced in the legislature in 1855 by Horace Hawes, an assemblyman from San Francisco, and enough support was gained to force its final enactment on April 19, 1856. Under the provisions of this act the charter of the city of San Francisco was repealed, and there was created a corporation styled "The City and County of San Francisco," which was to act in the twofold capacity of city and county. The changes in the form of the government were not radical in principle, being chiefly excisions and consolidations. The bicameral city council was superseded by the county board of supervisors; the city assessors were replaced by the county assessor; the county tax-collectors gave way to the city collector; and many similar changes were made. A few duplications survived, as in the case of city attorney and district attorney, but they were not sufficiently numerous to defeat the purpose of consolidation.

In the matter of economy the advantage of unified local government became apparent at once. The historian Hittel records that under the new scheme of government the expenses of city and county government were reduced from $2,640,000 in 1855 to $350,000 in 1857. Such a record for economical administration certainly has not been maintained in San Francisco throughout the succeeding years, but no one can doubt that but for the unified local government the history of public finance in San Francisco would have been much more sordid than it is. Other benefits claimed to be attributable to the unified government are increased efficiency, freedom from legislative meddling, and greater adaptability to the practical exigencies of local government.[6]

While there have been important charter changes in San Francisco since 1856, there have been no departures from the basic features of the consolidation act.

SEPARATION AND SIMPLIFICATION
ST. LOUIS: 1876

The story of St. Louis differs from any that have preceded.[7] Prior to 1876 St. Louis county included the city of St. Louis and an extensive rural area lying outside of the corporate boundaries of the city. The rapid growth of the city resulted in many extensions of its boundaries and a decided complication of the problems of municipal

[6] American Political Science Review (supp.) Vol. VI, No. 1.
[7] Ibid.

government. Although the area of the county still greatly exceeded that of the city, the population of the city so enormously exceeded that of the rural parts of the county as to work a profound modification in the character of city and county politics. While the county was a corporate entity exercising within the city many purely municipal functions and others vitally affecting municipal affairs, the government of the county was for the most part controlled by rural politicians whose chief concern was to exploit the city for the benefit of themselves and the rural parts of the county. The result was the worst sort of misgovernment. County revenues were derived principally from the city and expended mainly in the rural parts of the county; the salaries of county officers were boosted to absurd figures, and offices were multiplied far beyond necessity; corruption became commonplace.

At the same time the government of the city was in no very healthy condition. The legislature had always shown a pernicious disposition to meddle in the affairs of the city, and the government of the city eventually fell into the hands of a gang of machine politicians who had intrenched themselves at Jefferson City and who were every bit as vicious as the county politicians, if not leagued with them. The city of St. Louis was obviously suffering from two serious maladies—the dominance of county politics in municipal affairs and legislative intervention in local matters.

Home Rule Granted Also

Simple consolidation of city and county as in San Francisco would not do in St. Louis. The rural sections of the county could not have been brought under the unified government with any degree of success, and probably the mischievous intervention of the state legislature in municipal affairs would have been aggravated by such a course. Secession from the county became therefore the watchword of the reform party in St. Louis. Agitation began as early as 1843 and was carried on with great energy during the decade immediately preceding the constitutional convention of 1875. The meeting of this constituent assembly afforded a supreme opportunity to the champions of city and county separation. By virtue of adroit manœuvering they procured the insertion in the constitutional draft of sections 20 to 25 inclusive of Article IX. The constitution was ratified by the people on August 22, 1876, and went into effect sixty days later. The most curious and noteworthy fact about the sections referred to above, is that they not only opened the way for separation of city and county, but at the same time empowered the city of St. Louis to extend its boundaries and to "frame a charter for the government of the city thus enlarged." This marked the beginning of municipal home rule in the United States. According to the testimony of persons acquainted with the "inside" history of this famous home-rule provision, it was not a part of the original plan for the separation of city and county and was included only upon the insistence of certain influential German-American citizens who had in mind creating for St. Louis a status similar to that enjoyed by the free cities of Germany—Hamburg, Lübeck, and Bremen. It is said also that at first the home-rule proposal was opposed by city and county alike and was only carried in the convention because by a separate section (section 16 of Article IX) the same privilege was extended to all cities of the state having a population of 100,000 and over.

The machinery provided for the separation of city and county and

framing a new government may be summarized as follows:

> The council of the city and the county court of the county were to meet in joint session and order an election at which was to be chosen a board of thirteen freeholders, which board should be obligated "to propose a scheme for the enlargement and definition of the boundaries of the city, the reorganization of the government of the county, the adjustment of the relations of the city thus enlarged and the residue of St. Louis county, by a charter in harmony with and subject to the constitution and laws of Missouri, which shall among other things provide for a chief executive and two houses of legislation, one of which shall be elected by general ticket. . . . It was further provided that this scheme and charter must be completed and properly filed with the mayor of the city and the presiding justice of the county court within ninety days after the election of the board. Within thirty days thereafter it was to be submitted to the voters in the following manner: The scheme of separation was to be submitted to the qualified voters of the whole county and the charter to the qualified voters of the city as enlarged. If approved by a majority of those voting at the election, the scheme of separation was to become the organic law of the city and county and the charter the organic law of the enlarged city, the two to be in full force and operation within sixty days after their adoption.

The machinery thus provided was set in motion immediately after the new constitution became effective. The board of freeholders was duly elected and the scheme and charter prepared, submitted and voted upon by the people. The certified returns showed that the charter had carried by a majority of 558 and that the scheme of separation had been defeated by a margin of 1416. This precipitated a serious situation, as it was not clear that the scheme and the charter were separable. However, there were so many charges of fraudulent registration and voting that application was made for a judicial recount. The court of appeals of St. Louis conducted the recount, and, on March 5, 1877, it declared that both the charter and the scheme of separation had carried by substantial majorities.

No comprehensive survey of the scheme of separation and the new charter is possible within the limits prescribed for this article, but a few of the outstanding features may be noted. The enlarged city of St. Louis was completely divorced from the residue of St. Louis county, which was organized as a county apart from the city of St. Louis. In the city all of the county offices except sheriff, coroner, and public administrator were abolished. So far the plan was simplicity itself, but when it came to dividing public property, apportioning public debts, and such readjustments, the settlement was not so easy. The intent of the separation scheme was that all public property falling within the limits of the enlarged city should become the property of the city, but that the county should be fairly compensated for all of its losses. To this end provision was made that the city should have all county property of whatever character within its extended limits, and in consideration therefor should assume the entire county debt (both interest and principal) and the park debt. A board of finance was created for the purpose of ascertaining and verifying the indebtedness of the county and certifying the same to the city, and for other minor functions. The foregoing provisions did not extend to school property, and as this settlement was very complicated it will not be discussed here.

Expenses Immediately Reduced

The beneficial effects of separation and consolidation at St. Louis have never been seriously questioned. A reduction of the cost of government was the most immediate and obvious gain. In the first year following the unification the tax rate was reduced 62½

cents per $100 despite the augmented area of the city, and a further reduction of 15 cents was effected in the succeeding year. At the same time the bonded indebtedness was steadily lowered, and a long-accumulating floating debt was paid off during the first fiscal year of the reorganized city. Commenting on these facts one writer says:

> It was not until a fiscal year had elapsed after the city government had been recast and reorganized under the charter and separation scheme that a fair opportunity was presented of summarizing and examining the results of the new system. This opportunity presented itself at the May session of 1878, when the mayor stated that the immediate results had been reduction in taxation and in the expenses of departments, and an improved system of public institutions. . . . The municipal affairs of the city for the fiscal year ending in June, 1879, were prosperous and satisfactory to no ordinary degree. The penal and charitable institutions were in excellent order and economically managed; the fiscal and improvement departments were conducted with integrity and energy, and at no period in the history of the city had its credit been better or had a more practical and efficient system controlled the expenditure of the city revenue, the management of the city debt, and the operations on public works.[8]

The separation of the city from the county and the simplification of the consolidated government did not of course mark the advent of the millennium, and it is quite probable that the reform enthusiasm of the new administration overmatched that of its successors. Certainly there have been some sordid pages in the history of St. Louis since 1876. Nevertheless it will not be denied that the unity achieved under the scheme of 1876 has been a potent factor in the upbuilding of St. Louis and in promoting better government. The plan of 1876 was seriously defective in one particular; namely, failure to provide for future extensions of the boundaries of the city. The city soon outgrew its extended boundaries, and is now confronted with an embarrassing annexation problem. Although the charter of 1876 was much modified with the passing of the years and in 1914 was completely set aside, it has not been possible to secure the further enlargement of the boundaries of the city.

[8] Scharf, *History of St. Louis City and County*, Vol. I, pp. 712–713.

FORMATION OF GREATER NEW YORK: 1898

Doubtless the most noted case of municipal consolidation in this country is the fashioning of the present city of Greater New York out of the metropolitan district formerly composed of New York (Manhattan), Brooklyn, Richmond county, and portions of Kings, Queens, and Westchester counties.[9] On December 1, 1897, just prior to the consolidation, the population of this metropolitan area was estimated at more than 3,000,000. This vast population was for all practical purposes an organic unit. The center of industrial, commercial, and social life was on the island of Manhattan, while the other communities were for the most part economic satellites of this great center. Politically, however, the metropolitan population was not one body, but upward of forty. Chaos reigned supreme. Cities, counties, villages, school districts, detached boards, and quasi-independent officers contracted debts, enacted local legislation, and carried on the administrative operations of local government without any co-ordination or co-operation. The effect was calamitous. Not only was the natural evolution of the metropolitan area retarded because of the difficulty of securing united action on the great

[9] Leslie, *History of Greater New York*, Vol. I, Chap. 19; also Henschel, *Historical Sketch of Greater New York, passim*.

problems of transportation, sanitation, city planning, housing, public safety, and the like, which were basic determinative factors in growth, but the financial situation, except in the case of New York, was desperate. Brooklyn was bonded up to the constitutional limit and indebted in excess of that limit. The assessed valuation of property in Brooklyn was high, and so was the tax rate. Analagous conditions prevailed in the other suburbs, except that the pinch of high taxation was perhaps not quite so acute as in Brooklyn. New York was fortunate in having a comparatively low assessed valuation and tax rate and in having its debt-incurring power practically unimpaired. In fact it was asserted in 1893 by Mayor Gilroy of New York that by lifting her assessed valuation New York would be able to incur sufficient indebtedness to buy Brooklyn outright. It is plain therefore that union with New York was not without a balm for the wounded local pride of the communities which submerged themselves in Greater New York.

The New York History

The history of the New York consolidation has been so often and so fully told that it will not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that after a campaign whose beginnings can be traced back as far as 1830, the legislature of the state of New York in 1894 passed a measure providing for a vote on the question of consolidation by the citizens of the districts concerned. The vote was taken on November 6, 1894. The most interesting feature of this election was that the vote was advisory only and in reality settled nothing. This resulted from the construction placed upon the measure by the legislature at the time of enactment and from the instructions given to the voters. Whether this had any effect in procuring a vote favorable to consolidation it is impossible to say, but the total majority for consolidation was surprisingly large. Despite the fact that Brooklyn, Flushing, and Mt. Vernon returned small majorities adverse to consolidation, these majorities were wiped out by the decisive pro-consolidation vote cast in the other districts voting. The case of Mt. Vernon was unique. It had not been included in the districts originally authorized to vote on the question but was added by virtue of a special act of the legislature passed at the instance of a few of its citizens. When it voted against consolidation, it was decided that there was no authority to include it in the ultimate consolidation.

Pursuant to the favorable vote on the consolidation question, steps were taken to procure legislation to put it into effect. However, the manœuvering of the opponents of consolidation forestalled this consummation until May 11, 1896, when the act effectuating consolidation was finally signed by the governor. Only a few provisions of this act demand attention here. It set the date (January 1, 1898) when the consolidation should become effective and provided for the creation of a charter commission to draft a charter for the greater city. The only restrictions laid upon the charter commission were that county government should not be included in the consolidation, and that it should provide for an equal and uniform rate of valuation and taxation throughout the consolidated area.

The Plan Very Complex

The charter of Greater New York as formulated by the charter commission is entirely too complex for brief analysis. Probably the feature of most interest to the student of municipal unification is the system of borough organization and autonomy. The persistence of strong local feeling in the

several component parts of the greater city made it seem inadvisable to institute a thoroughly centralized plan of government. Accordingly the metropolitan area was organized into five boroughs, as follows: the borough of Manhattan, consisting of Manhattan Island; the borough of Bronx, composed of that portion of the former city of New York lying north of the Harlem River plus the sections of Westchester county recently annexed; the borough of Brooklyn, which included the former city of Brooklyn and certain portions of Kings county; the borough of Queens which embraced the western portion of Queens county; and the borough of Richmond, consisting of the whole of Staten Island. Each of these boroughs elects a president who is administrative head of the borough and responsible for the discharge of those governmental functions reserved to the boroughs by the charter. These functions are confined mainly to local improvements, such as construction of sewers, sewage disposal, construction and maintenance of public highways, and the maintenance and operation of public buildings. The five borough presidents, together with the mayor, the comptroller, and the president of the board of aldermen, constitute the board of estimate and apportionment, which through its financial initiative and control has evolved into the principal governing body of the city. The members of the board of estimate and apportionment do not have equal voting power, the votes being so distributed that those who represent the city as a whole can outvote those who represent the boroughs. The distribution is as follows: the mayor, the comptroller, and the president of the board of aldermen cast three votes each; the presidents of the boroughs of Manhattan and Brooklyn, two each; and the presidents of the boroughs of Bronx, Queens, and Richmond, one each. To reinforce still more the control of those who represent the city at large, it is provided that a quorum of the board shall consist of a sufficient number of members to cast nine votes, including always two who cast three votes each.

The most conspicuous shortcoming of the unification was the exclusion of the counties. In the years prior to consolidation there had been a gradual trimming of the functions of the counties of New York and Kings until they became little more than districts for the administration of justice and for the election of certain indispensable constitutional county officers. At the time of the consolidation the counties of Queens and Richmond were reduced to a similar status. That these counties as entities of local government were retained largely because of the political patronage they provide is generally conceded, and certainly this was the motive behind the creation of Bronx county in 1914. The next step toward the complete unification of Greater New York will be the elimination of the five counties.

Physical Integration Followed

Of the after-effects of the consolidation we must perforce speak very briefly. In the realm of finance the experience of the greater city was complex and puzzling.[10] It finished its first year with a deficit of over $7,000,000. The financial morass into which Brooklyn in particular had sunk, and the necessity of greatly extended governmental services and public improvements in the outlying districts, placed the new government in a very trying position. In the realm of economic and social development the story of the greater city since consolidation is simply fabulous. The political

[10] Coler, *The Financial Effects of Consolidation, passim.*

integration of the various districts in the metropolitan area soon resulted in physical integration through the construction of bridges, tunnels, rapid-transit systems, and water-supply systems. With physical integration came that marvelous development of the outlying boroughs which has so astonished the world and which has brought the population of Brooklyn up to 2,002,262, that of the Bronx to 732,016, that of Queens to 466,811, and that of Richmond to 115,959. That this basic unity of the metropolitan district has been one of the most potent factors in fostering the commercial and industrial development which has made New York the first city of the world scarcely needs to be said.

SEPARATION AND CONSOLIDATION DENVER: 1902–1911

The history of the unification of local government in Denver is rich in incident. Prior to the unification Denver was the county seat of Arapahoe county, which was of enormous area and sparsely populated except for the city of Denver. There was very little community of interest between the rural sections of the county and the city, and this conflict of interests reacted upon Denver and its government in a most unhappy way. The structure of the city government was itself seriously defective, being the loose-jointed board-council-mayor type so popular in this country three or four decades ago. The legislature of the state was given to pernicious meddling in municipal affairs, and in the two all-important functions of public safety and public works it had superseded the city authorities with state boards. Contending public utility corporations were at the same time fighting desperately for monopolistic dominion of the city. Here was an unsurpassed opportunity for the operations of predatory political machines, and the opportunity was not overlooked; Denver became notorious for the corruption and turbulence of her local politics.[11]

Several states following the example of Missouri had incorporated in their constitutions provisions for municipal home rule, and, observing these developments, reform leaders in Denver turned to home rule as the only escape from the intolerable political conditions prevailing in their city. Separation of city and county and simplification of the government of the city were secondary considerations to them; the paramount issue was home rule. A movement for home rule for Denver was started in the state legislature in 1899, but nothing came of it. In 1901 Senator J. A. Rush introduced a bill submitting to the electorate of the state a home-rule amendment to the constitution. The proposed amendment was not confined to Denver alone, but applied to all cities of the first and second class, thus enlisting valuable aid in securing its passage by the legislature and its eventual triumph at the polls. It was submitted to the people and overwhelmingly ratified at the general election in 1902.

At this juncture the history of the now famous article XX of the Colorado constitution really begins. The first section of the amendment declared that "The municipal corporation known as the city of Denver, and all municipal corporations and that part of the quasi-municipal corporation known as the county of Arapahoe, in the state of Colorado, included within the boundaries of the said city of Denver as the same shall be bounded when this amendment takes effect, are hereby consolidated and are hereby declared to be a single body politic and corporate, by

[11] See King, *History of the Government of Denver*, Chaps. V and VI.

the name of the 'City and County of Denver.'" The implication was that the boundaries of the city were to be considerably extended prior to the taking effect of the amendment, and so it came to pass. Legislation was secured enlarging the area of the city by specifically annexing certain contiguous territory. In this way several former suburban towns whose aggregate population was about 6,000 were added to the city, together with a considerable amount of unsettled territory.

First Charter Defeated

Pursuant to the amendment, a charter convention was elected to frame a new charter for the new corporation. A very commendable charter was prepared, but it so greatly reduced the possible spoils of party warfare by the introduction of the short-ballot principle that it aroused the hostility of the machine organizations of both parties. Furthermore it contained a provision looking toward more stringent regulation of public utilities, and thus earned the opposition of the corporate interest. These hostile forces in league were able to send the charter to defeat at the polls on September 22, 1903. A second charter convention became necessary and was assembled on December 8, 1903. The draft prepared by the second charter convention omitted the provisions which were unacceptable to the politicians and the corporations, and consequently it was easily ratified on March 29, 1904. At the first election under the new instrument, held in May, 1904, city and county offices were merged without question. But when the fall campaign of 1904 came around the question of whether a full set of county officers could be nominated was raised and finally taken to the courts. It is quite unnecessary here to enter into the technicalities of the extended litigation which ensued and which practically suspended until 1911 the real consolidation of city and county governments.[12] In the year last named the supreme court of the state terminated this legal controversy by a sweeping opinion quite the reverse of its former pronouncements. A third charter convention met in 1913 and proposed amendments to the charter of 1904, which, when approved by the voters, put the commission plan of government into effect. After three years this was abandoned by the adoption of the so-called "Speer Amendment," which provided for a highly centralized administration under an elected mayor.

Economy Plus Efficiency

Because of the tempestuous history of the consolidation of local governments in Denver, the results are hard to measure. Probably the most obvious is economy. The financial reports of the city and county show that in 1911 (the last year that a complete set of officers for both city and county was maintained) the total cost of local government was $679,400, while in 1917 with simplification and consolidation in effect it was $476,600, and this despite a sharp rise in price levels in the meantime. It is also the well-nigh unanimous testimony of those associated with the consolidated government that this startling economy has been accompanied by increased efficiency.

UNION OF ALLEGHENY WITH PITTSBURGH: 1906–1908

It has been asserted that the union of Pittsburgh and Allegheny was a Sabine marriage in which Pittsburgh assumed the rôle of the abducting Roman, and there are facts to support such a contention. However, if there

[12] For a full discussion see McBain, *The Law and Practice of Municipal Home Rule*, pp. 498–531.

was ever a case vindicating the casuistic argument that the end justifies the means, this was one. Prior to the annexation, the city of Pittsburgh occupied a tongue of land formed by the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers. The population of Pittsburgh at that time was estimated at 383,000. Across the Allegheny river on a similar tongue of land was the city of Allegheny with an estimated population of 142,000; across the Monongahela river were four incorporated boroughs whose combined population was about 8,000; and to the rear of Pittsburgh was the small township of Sterrett with a population of 600 to 1,000. These contiguous and clustering communities were in matters industrial, commercial and social, integral parts of the city of Pittsburgh, and with it they constituted one homogeneous metropolitan district. Pittsburgh was the center of commerce and industry, while the outlying communities were either economic tributaries or residential suburbs. With the multiplication of bridges and the perfection of trolley systems this close inter-relationship was greatly heightened.[13]

A Social Unit Politically Subdivided

On the political side, however, this metropolitan community was broken into many and discordant parts. Many of the leading figures in the affairs of Pittsburgh resided in the outlying communities and consequently had no share in the government of Pittsburgh. The effect of this absenteeism was to set the stage for the ring politicians, who for many years played fast and loose with the affairs of the city. Plans for improving the industrial and commercial position of the city always had to run the gauntlet of factional opposition and often were entirely thwarted by the degraded city administration. Interests which proximity made common to all communities in the metropolitan area could not be promoted in common; and in the case of sewage disposal and water supply the lack of harmony among the various municipalities threatened to defeat large civic projects and to imperil the health of the inhabitants of all. There was intense jealousy in the allocation of the financial burden of public improvements. Pittsburgh resented carrying the cost of public improvements which accrued largely to the benefit of the surrounding communities, while the latter were incapable of footing the bills for the extensive improvements and services which their metropolitan situation made necessary.

In consideration of the foregoing facts it is not surprising that public-minded citizens early reached the conclusion that the only hope of permanent amelioration of conditions lay in the political unification of the metropolitan area, and especially in the union of Pittsburgh and Allegheny. For many years, beginning as far back as 1854, this question was an issue in the Pennsylvania legislature; but nothing was accomplished in the way of assisting legislation until 1905 when the governor, largely at the instance of commercial and civic organizations in Pittsburgh, summoned the legislature in special session to enact a law permitting cities contiguous to one another to consolidate and form one city. Special legislation for cities being forbidden by the constitution of the state, the legislature was unable to enact a law designating Pittsburgh and Allegheny and empowering them to unite, but resorted to the subterfuge which the courts in most states have tolerated, and on February 7, 1906, passed an enabling act applicable to all cities of the second class, Pittsburgh and Allegheny being the only cities in that class.

[13] Killikelly, *History of Pittsburgh*, pp. 241–244.

Compulsory Annexation

There can be little doubt that the act of 1906 was passed to enable Pittsburgh to absorb Allegheny without her consent. Otherwise the act need not have been passed, for pre-existing statutes authorized one city to annex another upon the initiative of and with the approval of the voters of the city to be annexed. The act of 1906, however, provided specifically that the consolidation should come about only by the annexation of the smaller by the larger city; that the initiative might be taken by the common council or by petition signed by two per cent of the voters of either city; and that if a majority of the total vote cast in both cities should be in favor of consolidation, the court of quarter sessions should issue a decree declaring them to be consolidated. Thus it was made possible for Pittsburgh to take the initiative away from Allegheny and to outvote her at the election; and precisely that thing happened. Pursuant to the provisions of the act a petition was filed with the court of quarter sessions of Allegheny county by certain citizens of Pittsburgh praying for the union of Pittsburgh and Allegheny; the court conducted a hearing as required by the act, dismissed the exceptions which had been filed against the petition, and ordered a special election to be held in June, 1906. The vote of Allegheny was against consolidation, but that of Pittsburgh was so preponderantly for it that out of a total of 37,804 votes cast there was a majority of 2,504 for consolidation. Accordingly on June 16, 1906, the decree of the court went forth declaring Allegheny to be annexed to and consolidated with Pittsburgh. Allegheny contested the legality of these proceedings and carried the case through all the courts of the state and finally to the Supreme Court of the United States, which on November 18, 1907, handed down an opinion to the effect that nothing in the act of 1906 and the procedure of annexation thereunder was in conflict with the Constitution of the United States.[14]

The annexation of Allegheny did not involve the other suburban boroughs and townships mentioned above, but they were joined to Pittsburgh at about the same time under the provisions of the general laws on the subject of annexation of contiguous municipalities.

The Actual Process of Consolidation

A detailed analysis of the act of February 7, 1906, is impossible in the limited space available here. Some of the leading provisions have already been noted, and a few others which were to apply only in the event of an election in favor of consolidation will be briefly mentioned. There was a group of provisions having to do with the settlement of the financial and proprietary problems resulting from consolidation. It was provided, for example that each of the consolidating cities should be liable separately to pay its own floating and bonded indebtedness, liabilities, and interest, such as existed at the time of the consolidation; and adequate administrative machinery was created for the enforcement of this rule. Another group of provisions had to do with the manner in which the governments of the two cities should be merged. The consolidation did not *ipso facto* deprive any officer of either of the two cities of his office or salary until the expiration of his term, but in this interim and until a system of government for the greater city could be organized, a temporary government was to be operative. The main features of this scheme were that the councils of the two cities were to be merged and meet as one body; that the mayor

[14] *Hunter* vs. *Pittsburgh*, 207 U. S. 161.

of the larger city was to become the mayor of the greater city and the mayor of the smaller city the deputy mayor; that every ordinance pertaining exclusively to the smaller city had to be presented to the deputy mayor for his approval; that the executive departments were consolidated, the department chief of the larger city becoming the head of the department and the department chief of the smaller city becoming the first assistant. The consolidation did not disturb the status of the school districts in either city; nor did it affect the status of the county government.

Improved Transportation and Taxation

The political integration of the metropolitan area of greater Pittsburgh brought some immediately beneficial results and many that were more remote. One of the quick results was the vast improvement of transportation connections between various portions of the metropolitan district by the abolition of bridge tolls and the introduction of a uniform street car fare and a system of universal transfers. Another was the complete revision of the formerly inequitable system of taxation. A third was the development of an adequate water supply system for the entire metropolitan area, replacing the contaminated water supplied by the formerly independent units. More remote benefits that are traceable to the awakened civic consciousness following consolidation are the inauguration of a city plan, enormous extensions of paving and street improvements, a reorganization of the school system, the building of playgrounds, markets, and a tuberculosis hospital.

WHEELING ABSORBS HER SUBURBS: 1920

Quite the latest achievement in municipal integration is the successful culmination of the annexation movement at Wheeling, West Virginia. The campaign was in charge of a representative committee of citizens known as the Greater Wheeling Committee, and the chamber of commerce was probably the most active civic agency in the movement.

A special act had to be secured from the state legislature to permit the question of annexation to be submitted simultaneously to the electorate of both Wheeling and the suburbs. The election, which occurred on November 26, 1919, resulted in favor of unification to become effective January 1, 1920. A suburban population of about 20,000 was thus added to the city of Wheeling.

Interesting features of the Wheeling campaign were the adoption of the commission-manager plan by Wheeling in 1917 largely to meet the objections of the suburbs to unification under the old plan of government; provision for the election of the members of the council of the new government on a general ticket, so that the annexed suburbs could participate in the choice of every member of the council; and the development of a comprehensive plan of public works, which could not be effectually carried out under the divided jurisdiction of nine distinct governmental units. These, reinforced by a strong appeal to community pride and patriotism, did a great deal to convince the suburbs of the advisability of consolidation.

THE CASE OF WASHINGTON, D. C.

Perhaps Washington ought to be mentioned as one of the cities that have achieved political unity, although it stands in a class by itself. Prior to 1846 the District of Columbia contained two counties and three cities. By the retrocession to Virginia of that

portion of the District lying west of the Potomac the number was reduced to one county and two cities. In 1871 Congress reorganized the government of the District by abolishing the separate county and city governments, and since that time they have had no separate existence.

III. WHAT REMAINS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

THE GREATER BOSTON MOVEMENT

The federal census of 1920 gives Boston a population of 748,060 and ranks Boston as the seventh city of the United States, but Boston newspapers and civic organizations insist that the true magnitude and importance of their city are not indicated by the census figures. It is pointed out that outside of the corporate limits of Boston but within a radius of fifteen miles of the state house in Boston there dwells a further population of over 700,000; and it is contended that Boston proper is but the torso of a great metropolitan community of about 1,500,000 inhabitants constituting an organic entity in all respects except political organization. At present this vast community is a morass of co-existent, overlapping, conflicting, and competing units of local government, there being in all fourteen cities, twenty-six towns, five counties, and five state boards or agencies functioning within the metropolitan area.

What this condition means is well set forth in "An Appeal for the Federation of the Metropolitan Cities and Towns," issued in 1919 by Mayor Peters of Boston. In urging the political unification of the metropolitan district Mayor Peters incidentally points out that the absence of political unity has had the following results: (1) It has rendered the metropolitan community incapable of co-operating effectively to secure freight rates favorable to the upbuilding of export trade and the establishment of regular steamship service with foreign ports; (2) it has been one of the major causes of the failure of the metropolitan community to provide terminal facilities conducive to shipping and trade; (3) it is responsible for the failure of the metropolitan district to develop adequate factory sites because of inability to provide street connections and housing facilities; (4) it is responsible for the decline of real estate values in many sections of Boston owing to the want of intelligent control of suburban developments; (5) it is responsible for Boston's falling under the domination of political organizations whose strength lies in control of the votes of the foreign population; (6) it is to blame for the failure to provide for police and fire protection and for street improvements on a metropolitan basis; (7) it has prevented the enactment of uniform health and housing laws which would relieve congestion in Boston and promote the growth of the less densely populated suburbs; (8) it has unduly inflated the cost of local government owing to duplication of services and overhead organization.

The question of merging the governmental agencies of the metropolitan area has been under discussion in Boston for many years. In 1896 a special commission was appointed by the legislature to study the problem of municipal administration in Boston and the adjoining municipalities, and it prepared a report recommending the federation of the various towns and cities as a single county which should have the functions of a municipal cor-

poration. In 1911 the Boston Chamber of Commerce reported a plan of federation through the creation of a metropolitan council consisting of representatives of the various municipalities. In the same year the state legislature created a second commission to consider the metropolitan problem, and this body recommended a plan of loose federation similar to the plan of the Chamber of Commerce.[15] In 1919 at the instance of Mayor Peters of Boston a bill was introduced in the state legislature authorizing the outright annexation of the suburban municipalities by Boston. The idea of a loose federation of municipalities was abandoned by the mayor in the hope that by pressing the movement for annexation he could precipitate discussion which would result in the crystallization of public opinion on the subject of unification, and also in the hope that if the bill should pass, some progress toward unification might be made by piecemeal annexation. It is needless to say that the bill did not succeed, and that unification at the present juncture seems as remote as ever.

The matter of city and county duplication is not a large factor in the Boston problem, although the metropolitan district intersects the boundaries of five counties. The reason is that the county in Massachusetts is primarily a judicial district with very attenuated functions of local government, and that Suffolk county, which is wholly included in the metropolitan district, has already been largely consolidated with the city of Boston. The basic difficulty is the evolution of some sort of plan for unification that would be acceptable to the suburbs, for their voting strength is as great as that of Boston and nothing could be carried against the will of the suburbs. The borough plan has been considered and studied, but it is recognized that the application of the borough plan to the Boston problem would not be as easy as it was in the case of New York. In the latter case it was only necessary to achieve a bilateral compromise between New York and Brooklyn, where in Boston a several sided compromise would be necessary.

[15] American Political Science Review (Supp.) Vol. VI, No. 1; also Annals of the American Academy, 1913, pp. 134–152.

CHICAGO'S UNIFICATION PROBLEM

Probably metropolitan Chicago has the most bewildering system of local government in the United States at the present time. It is almost incredible that such a crazy-quilt of interwoven, overlapping, cross-pulling political agencies could be the product of sane minds. Functioning within the city of Chicago there are thirty-eight distinct local governments, and in Cook county as a whole, which includes the major portion of the metropolitan area, there are three hundred and ninety-two. Besides the city government of Chicago and the government of Cook county there are the sanitary district, towns, villages, school districts, drainage districts, park districts, forest preserve districts, library districts, in endless and unspeakable confusion. Take the case of the towns, for example. There are thirty-eight towns in Cook county; eight are entirely within the city of Chicago; six others lie partly within and partly without the city; ten are entirely within the sanitary district; nine are partly within and partly without the sanitary district; and eleven are entirely without the sanitary district. Or take the case of the incorporated municipalities. There are seventy-eight incorporated municipalities in Cook county in addition to Chicago, and of these forty-six are within the sanitary district and the remainder without. And so it is with

park districts, school districts, drainage districts, and the like. There is no language obscure enough to depict the reality of the chaos which exists.[16]

The movement for unified local government in Chicago dates back as far as the constitutional convention of 1870 when an effort was made to induce the convention to include in the draft submitted to the people a provision authorizing any city of over 200,000 inhabitants to be organized as a separate county. When this effort was balked the consolidation idea languished for a number of years. In 1899 a constitutional amendment was proposed in the legislature of the state to provide for consolidation of local governments in Chicago, but it did not pass. Four years later another amendment was proposed, submitted to the people, and ratified. The effect of this was to make possible special legislation for Chicago, subject to local referendum, and also to authorize the consolidation of local governments entirely within the boundaries of the city. Acting under the amendment of 1904, a charter convention in the city of Chicago prepared a comprehensive charter effecting many consolidations. Unhappily this charter was modified by the state legislature and subsequently defeated at the polls. In 1915 a second charter was prepared and submitted to the voters, and it also was defeated.

The leading proponent of unification of local governments in Chicago in recent years has been the Chicago Bureau of Public Efficiency, which has published a series of studies showing the complexity of the present system, the savings and improvements possible under a unified plan of government, and has made specific recommendations for the consolidation and reorganization of local governments. In 1920 the Bureau of Public Efficiency drafted and put before the Illinois constitutional convention a proposed article of the constitution to provide the authorization and the machinery to effect the political unification of metropolitan Chicago.[17] Although this proposal was not accepted *in toto* by the convention, it has formulated and adopted three provisions allowing for the consolidation of local governments in Chicago. The proposed Chicago home rule article provides for the consolidation of all local governments in the limits of the city by charter convention, subject to certain reservations and conditions in the event of the application of the consolidation to the Sanitary District and the Forest Preserve District. The other two provisions are regarded as of doubtful value and probably will never be invoked. All three of these provisions have passed their second reading in the convention, and at the present writing (June 27, 1922) the convention is meeting to consider the entire constitutional draft on third reading.

UNIFICATION PROPOSED FOR CLEVELAND

The same anomalies of local government that have been observed in other metropolitan centers are to be found in Cleveland and Cuyahoga county. The population of Cleveland is 796,841, but in the contiguous suburban communities of East Cleveland, Cleveland Heights, Lakewood, West Park, Shaker Heights, Bratenahl, and Euclid Village, there is a combined population of 101,820 which in every practical sense is a part and parcel of the city of Cleveland. This integrated metropolitan population is ninety-five per cent of the

[16] See Bulletin No. 11 prepared by the Legislative Reference Bureau for the Illinois Constitutional Convention, 1920.

[17] See Bulletin No. 38 of Chicago Bureau of Public Efficiency, Jan. 1920

population of Cuyahoga county and could be readily governed as one municipal corporation; but Cuyahoga county is overlaid with ninety-three detached and disconnected units of local self-government, these being largely cities, villages, townships, and school districts in the metropolitan area.

The disadvantages of disintegration and the corresponding advantages of unification have not received adequate consideration in Cleveland and her suburban satellites, and consequently the movement for consolidation has made little progress. Two civic organizations—The Civic League and the County Charter Government Association—have given the matter some attention, but have felt unable to undertake an intensive and persistent campaign. In 1919 a resolution proposing an amendment to the state constitution, which would provide for a consolidated form of city and county government, was introduced in the state senate, but it was shelved in committee, no opportunity being given for its consideration. In 1921 Representative Davis of Cuyahoga county introduced a bill to facilitate consolidation of local governments in Cuyahoga county, but this likewise received scant consideration by the legislature. In the spring of the present year movements for annexation developed in West Park and Lakewood, and commissions are now at work preparing terms of annexation to be later submitted to the voters.

*DEFEAT OF PROPOSED CONSOLIDATION, ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

In Alameda county, California, on the eastern shore of San Francisco Bay, has grown up a metropolitan district of considerable proportions. The population of Alameda county is 344,177, of which 314,575 are classed as urban residents by the Federal census of 1920. This urban population is concentrated mainly in the contiguous and occasionally overlapping cities of Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda, Piedmont, Emeryville, Albany and San Leandro. The remainder of the county, though more or less rural in character, is much affected by the character of government of the urban centers.

Prominent citizens have long been aware that in all large public matters the metropolitan district of Alameda county should be thoroughly unified, and a campaign looking toward that end has been going on for many years. In 1916 the City and County Government Association of Alameda County presented a plan for consolidation calculated to meet the opposition of the outlying communities to any form of organic union with Oakland which would submerge their individualities. The plan proposed rather a loose federal form of organization under which the component cities would become autonomous boroughs and would retain important local powers while such functions as police protection, promotion of public health, assessment and collection of taxes, would be delegated to the central government. A unique feature of the plan was that it proposed to combine the city-manager idea with that of an elected mayor.[18]

Unfortunately it was not foreseen that this proposition was doomed to sure defeat because of the way in which, under the state constitution, it had to be submitted to the voters of the smaller cities. The reorganization plan could not be presented directly to the voters of the metropolitan district to

* For a more detailed account of the Alameda county proposals see the NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW for July 1922, which appeared after this article was in type.

[18] For summary of the proposed charter see pamphlet published by City and County Government Association of Alameda County, Sept. 1916.

stand or fall on its merits. According to the state constitution the initiative must be taken by a city having a population of 50,000 or more by the preceding Federal census, which meant that only Oakland could take the lead. Furthermore the question of annexation had to be submitted to each of the contiguous municipalities separately. This meant that the various municipalities would have to vote to merge themselves with Oakland before the question of a new form of government could be taken up, and it did not seem expedient to proceed in this way.

The proponents of the federation plan then proceeded to secure an amendment to the state constitution, which would relieve them of the embarrassments encountered under the existing provisions relating to municipal consolidation. In 1918 an amendment was put up and adopted, which provided that a charter might be prepared by a board elected by the citizens of an entire county prior to the submission of the question of consolidation, and that then the question of consolidation should be put to each municipality separately to decide whether or not it could come in under the proposed charter. Acting under the provisions of this amendment a city-county manager charter was submitted to the voters of the county on November 15, 1921 and defeated. This outcome was said to be attributable to the unwillingness of the smaller cities to give up their individuality and merge with Oakland. From the standpoint of the experimentalist it is unfortunate that this unique charter is not to have a trial. So many innovations are seldom combined in one instrument of government. The governing body was to have been a metropolitan council of seven members elected by districts. The administrative functions of the council would have been exercised by a manager appointed by the council at a salary of not less than $12,000 a year. Only the district attorney, assessor, auditor, and judges would have remained elective, and all other city and county offices were to have been consolidated or abolished entirely. In order to preserve a limited amount of local autonomy for the several cities and towns to be consolidated a scheme of borough government was to have been combined with the city-county manager plan just described.

PROPOSED CITY AND COUNTY CONSOLIDATION, PORTLAND, OREGON

Since 1913 the question of the consolidation of the city of Portland and the county of Multnomah has been seriously agitated. This propaganda led in 1919 to a movement, in which fifteen civic organizations joined, for a constitutional amendment to effect consolidation. Committees were appointed by each of the coöperating organizations, and after some weeks of labor a proposed amendment was evolved. A resolution authorizing the submission of this amendment to the voters was introduced in the state senate in January, 1919, by the Multnomah county delegation. It passed the senate, but was defeated in the lower house by the machinations of hostile political interests. It was then proposed to get it before the voters by initiative petition, but this as yet has not been done.

Had the amendment passed it would have provided for the outright consolidation of the city of Portland, the city of Gresham, the city of Fairview, the city of Troutdale, the port of Portland, and county of Multnomah, all school districts and road districts in Multnomah county, into a single body politic and corporate to be styled "The City and County of Portland."

CONSOLIDATION MOVEMENT IN LOS ANGELES

The city of Los Angeles with its environs south of the Sierra Madre mountains composes a metropolitan district substantially unified in economic and social interests, but divided politically into thirty-eight municipalities, one hundred and eighty-seven school districts, thirty-four lighting districts, thirty-three roads districts, three waterworks districts, two protection districts and one county. The population of this area is in the neighborhood of 800,000.

Various forms of political integration have been advocated for this metropolitan area for many years, and many investigations and studies have been made by civic agencies and official bodies; but the net results have been divided counsels and inability to unite upon any definite plan of action. The latest and most comprehensive survey of the problem is the brochure published by the Taxpayers' Association of California in October, 1917. This report advocates the severance of the metropolitan district from Los Angeles county and the creation of a unitary government of the manager type for the consolidated municipalities.

No active campaign in behalf of this plan has been undertaken, and recent advices indicate that events are now proceeding toward a different result. The city of Los Angeles has established an annexation and consolidation commission, and this body is in process of developing a consistent and comprehensive program of unification. The policy is not aggressive, but educative. The program, as the secretary of the commission states it, "consists of lending encouragement and assistance in such ways as we can to those communities who of their own accord find reasons that seem to argue for their becoming a part of the larger unit." To this it might be added that the control of the city of Los Angeles over the water supply of the metropolitan area and over the facilities for sewage disposal are such that many of the suburban municipalities have no great difficulty in discovering most cogent and compelling reasons for consolidation with Los Angeles.

PROBLEM OF ESSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

One of the most peculiar local government problems in the country is that of Essez county, New Jersey. The county has an area of 127 square miles, but ninety-six per cent of its population is in the metropolitan section lying east of the Watchung ridge. Newark with a population of 414,216 is the nucleus of this metropolitan community, but in addition to Newark there are in the metropolitan area eleven other municipalities whose aggregate population is about 257,000. Furthermore, this area is subject to the government of Essex county, to four state-controlled instrumentalities for local government, and to five administrative agencies appointed by the courts. It was said that Newark is the nucleus of this metropolitan area, but that is hardly accurate. Although physical contiguity does bring about considerable community of interest between Newark and the outlying municipalities, several of the latter, such as East Orange, Glen Ridge, and Montclair, are quite as much residential suburbs of New York as of Newark. This fact tends to weaken the community bond throughout the metropolitan district and engenders a fierce spirit of particularism which is most difficult to combat.

Although there may be doubt whether the social and economic solidarity of the metropolitan portion

of Essex county is as great as in most metropolitan centers, it is nevertheless true that the absence of political unity is the cause of many anomalous conditions which give rise to civic ills. In the summer of 1919 the New York Bureau of Municipal Research at the request of the Newark Chamber of Commerce made an administrative survey which brought to light many of the pernicious consequences of political disintegration in Essex county.[19] It was found that comprehensive city planning, a necessity if the metropolitan district is to develop properly, could not be carried out because of inability of the several municipalities to coöperate; it was found that there was costly and blundering duplication in the handling of dependents, defectives, and criminals; it was observed that the fire hazard was greatly magnified by the lack of standardization of fire-fighting equipment throughout the metropolitan area; it was discovered that highway improvements were retarded and unintelligently done because of the multiplicity of conflicting political jurisdictions; and it was found that the public health was constantly imperilled by a multiplicity of diverse health codes and regulations administered by part-time health officers.

To cure these conditions the New York Bureau of Municipal Research recommended the detachment of the metropolitan and the rural sections of Essex County, and the creation of some sort of political unity in the former. It was suggested that the governmental machinery of Essex county be merged with that set up for the metropolitan area, and that the municipalities within the metropolitan area should federate under some sort of super-government which should have power to act in all matters of general, as distinguished from purely local concern. No definite steps have been taken to put these recommendations into effect, although certain civic bodies and newspapers have given them support.

[19] This report has not been printed in full, but an abstract of it was published by the Newark Chamber of Commerce.

UNIFICATION RECEIVING ATTENTION IN OTHER CITIES

The question of consolidation of local governments has received attention in a great many other cities where the situation is probably quite as bad as in the cases discussed above, but where for one reason or another no definite consolidation movement has crystallized. Mention may be made of Detroit, Buffalo, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Seattle, Jersey City, Kansas City, Mo., Rochester, and Wilmington, Delaware. Word has been received also that a charter commission has recently been chosen in San Diego, California, to prepare a consolidated city and county charter.

SUMMARY

It is extremely hazardous to attempt to draw general conclusions from such a large number of widely varying cases as have been reviewed in the foregoing pages. There are, however, certain facts which ought, for the convenience of the reader, to be brought together in some sort of summary.

The first striking fact with reference to the process of unification is that in no instance has a metropolitan district been able to compass its own unification. Statutory and constitutional obstacles have invariably made it necessary to obtain legislation or constitutional amendments, and in several cases

unification has been accomplished by the fiat of these enactments. It is also to be observed that gradual consolidation by occasional annexation of clustering municipalities to a central one has not been a successful mode of achieving political integration. It will be noted also that most of the cities now striving for unification have statutory or constitutional changes as the first objective of their respective campaigns.

Another outstanding fact is that popular consent to unification has seldom been deemed indispensable. The only cases in which the question was squarely presented to all of the people concerned were St. Louis and Alameda County. The referendum which preceded consolidation in New York had no legal force, and the result was open to various constructions. The Pittsburgh referendum was designedly a trick election, although it was held legally binding. The plebiscite in the case of Denver included the voters of the entire state, which was in effect taking the power to decide the matter out of the hands of the city. Apparently the spirit of the present time is more democratic, for nearly all of the cities now working for unification contemplate a reference of the question to the people of the districts immediately concerned.

In the matter of pecuniary and proprietary adjustments each case is *sui generis*, but there is a general tendency for the succeeding government to take over all of the assets and assume all of the obligations of its component parts.

Another significant fact is that in no case has unification been unaccompanied by some kind of governmental reorganization. Except in the case of New York, it has been possible to reorganize the government on a unitary basis; but many cities now engaged in campaigns for unification have been greatly attracted by the borough plan as worked out in New York. Whether that plan would be adaptable to all cases may be seriously doubted. It is usually possible to make all proper and needful concessions to local sentiment without granting the local autonomy incident to the borough plan. In the reorganization of government following the consolidation of city and county, there has been a noticeable reluctance to go the whole distance in the elimination of duplication, and consequently we find many amusing and incongruous survivals.

Extravagant claims of efficiency and economy subsequent to political unification have been made everywhere, but are exceedingly difficult to pin down to hard facts. The simplification of the organization of local government and the elimination of superfluous offices and services should naturally result in great savings, but there have been instances in which such savings have been hard to find. The only explanation of these cases, aside from maladministration, is that unification involved an enormous expansion of municipal services, which together with the pre-existing heavy burden of debt made a reduction of the cost of government impossible. Efficiency is imponderable and difficult to measure, but it may be assumed that certain gains in efficiency have followed political unification practically everywhere; it could not well be otherwise.

One gain about which there can be little doubt is the amelioration of civic conditions subsequent to political unification of metropolitan communities. Elaborate public improvements, better articulation of thoroughfares, extended and improved public utility services, more comprehensive and careful city planning, more adequate educational and eleemosynary institutions, and better governmental services—these are reported as the invariable results of

political unification. And as these are in a rough way a fair measure of the material and spiritual progress of communities, it seems not too much to conclude that political integration is indispensable to every metropolitan community that aspires to attain its maximum development as a center of industrial, commercial and social activity.

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